

Appl. No. : 09/965,786
Filed : September 27, 2001

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed December 18, 2002.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract as exceeding 150 words. Applicants have presented herein a new Abstract.

The Examiner objected to Claim 15, noting an apparent typographical error. Applicants thank the Examiner for the close inspection of the claims and the notation of this error. Applicants have requested correction of Claim 15 herein.

Applicants have amended Claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16 and 19. Applicants have canceled Claims 6, 12, 17, 18 and 20. Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13-16 and 19 are now pending in the application after this Response.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-5, 7-10 and 13-20 as being anticipated by or as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,162,122 to Acres. Applicants assert that the invention claimed is fundamentally different than that disclosed in Acres '122.

The Examiner asserts that Acres '122 discloses an information system and method of use thereof in which, among other things, multi-media information is generated and transmitted to a player tracking device for presentation to a player. The Examiner also asserts that Acres '122 discloses a system including an information host and a player tracking host.

Applicants assert that Acres '122 does not teach or suggest a gaming system or method in which multi-media information is presented at a player tracking device. Acres '122 is directed to a gaming device which reconfigures its payout schedule in response to outside commands in order to provide promotional bonuses. In the Acres '122 system, floor controllers support gaming

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machines. Col 7, lines 9-11. Each gaming machine includes a player tracking module (40). Col 8, lines 45-52. When activity is detected at a gaming machine by a floor controller, data (i.e., player tracking/activity information) is transmitted to a file server. Col. 7, lines 35-37. The Acres system thus does not include both a player tracking host and an information host.

Further, Acres does not disclose a system or method of generating and displaying multi-media information to a player utilizing a player tracking device. Acres does disclose a player tracking device including a card reader and, among other things, a lighted bezel comprising a plurality of LED lights. Col. 14, lines 59-65. These lights, or attributes thereof such as their color, are activated or changed based on different conditions, such as when a valid player card is inserted. See Claim 1 of Acres.

In the Acres system, multi-media information is not generated and transmitted over a player tracking system to a player tracking device. As acknowledged by the Examiner, Acres does not disclose a player tracking device including a speaker. Acres thus also does not disclose presenting multi-media information at the player tracking device, that information comprising images/video as well as audio information.

The Examiner indicates that Raven (U.S. Patent No. 5,429,361) teaches a player tracking device including a speaker and that it would be obvious to modify the Acres system to include a speaker to provide immediate audible feedback of card insertion.

Applicants disagree with this assertion. Applicants note that the invention as claimed is directed to a system and method for providing multi-media information to a player using a player tracking system and associated player tracking device. In a system such as Acres, video and other

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information is displayed to a player as part of game play or otherwise using the display of the gaming device. The player tracking device of Acres is simply used to read a player's card. Bezel indications and the like may be used to indicate card status to the player, such as the validity of their card. This is much different than a system in which a player tracking system and device are used as a conduit for the presentation of multi-media information. For example, in accordance with Applicants' method and system, television programming, advertising and the like may be presented to a player via the player tracking device, while not interfering with the player tracking function or the game information which is independently displayed to the player via the display of the gaming device.

Applicants thus first assert that it is not obvious to utilize a speaker in the Acres configuration in order to achieve the present invention, because a speaker is not needed in the Acres system since in the Acres system the player tracking device is not used for multi-media presentation. Second, Applicants assert that it is not obvious to present multi-media information as claimed. Again, Acres is simply concerned with using the player tracking device as a player tracking device, and not as a conduit for the presentation of other information, including that generated by a separate information system host.

Independent Claim 1

Independent Claim 1 recites an information system including both a player tracking host and an information system host. The information system host is configured to generate multi-media

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information which is transmitted to a player tracking device of a gaming machine over a communication link of the player tracking system.

Applicants assert that this claim defines allowable subject matter for the reasons described above, including the fact that Acres does not disclose a system including separate hosts as claimed, as well as a system in which multi-media information is generated, transmitted over a player tracking network and presented via a player tracking device.

Independent Claim 8

Independent Claim 8 comprises a method of using a system having similar features to the system of Independent Claim 1 and is therefore believed to be allowable for the same reasons.

Independent Claim 19

Independent Claim 19 recites a method of transmitting multi-media information to a player tracking device, storing it, and then periodically accessing and presenting that information at the player tracking device independent of player game play. Applicants assert that the prior art, including Acres, does not disclose such a method. In Acres, multi-media information is not stored or displayed. In fact, in Acres, no information is stored at the player tracking device and later displayed independent of player play/activity.

Claims 2-5, 7, 9-11 and 13-16

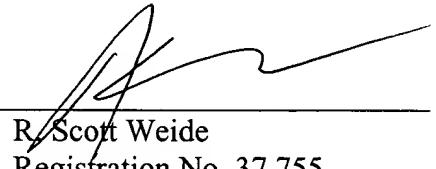
These claims are believed to be allowable for at least the reason that they depend from an allowable independent claim.

Summary

Applicants assert that Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13-16 and 19 are in a condition for allowance and respectfully request a notice as to the same. If any matters remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: April 18, 2003 By:


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